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HANS THE PAINTER.

CHAPTER I.

A PRETTY PIECE OF WORK.



MOST people have heard of the Rhine, if a great many have never seen it, the famous beautiful river that, taking its rise in Switzerland, and winding on between the vine-clad hills of France and Germany, widens out amid the flat marshy meadows of Holland, and falls at last into the North Sea.

Not far from the spot where the Rhine turns northward into Germany, stands the city of Basel. It is very ancient, and was probably founded by the Romans. It is a fine city, standing on high sloping banks, which are washed by the broad clear green river, and sheltered on one side by the Jura Mountains, and on the other by the tree-clad hills of the Black Forest. It has always been a very pros-

perous city; for one reason among several, that it stands at the meeting-point of the three countries of Switzerland, France, and Germany. I put Switzerland first, because Basel belongs to Switzerland, and is the capital of the canton, or particular division of the country. The people there call such a division a canton, just as in England we say county.

The cathedral of Basel is a curious building with red walls, and one of its towers shorter than the other. It also has a grand old fish-market, and a town hall whose front is adorned with frescoes. Frescoes are pictures painted in water-colours on freshly-prepared plaster. They are often to be seen on the inside walls of churches, and other public buildings in this country, but very rarely out-of-doors as one sees them abroad. There is one other famous thing in Basel, more famous even in times past than now, and that is its university, and this brings me to speak of the many famous men who have in their time studied and taught in it. One of these was the learned Dutchman Erasmus.

And if Basel contained a great many clever men, and these by the way not all in its university, it had also some queer customs of its own. One of these was, that its clocks always struck an hour forward of all the other clocks in the world. The tale went that this curious custom arose out of a conspiracy once made in Basel, to deliver the town to the enemy who

was outside trying to take it, when by chance seemingly, the big town-clock, having got out of gear, struck one when it should have struck twelve, and thus the plans of the conspirators were upset, and the city was saved; and ever since that time, to commemorate the fact, all the Basel clocks were made to strike one hour in advance

This plan rather put some folks about, but others found it convenient. There was for instance, a young scapegrace of the city, who nine times out of ten, persisted in forgetting the singular arrangement, and leaving off work just an hour too soon. That is to say, for example, when the clocks struck eleven, he said it was dinner-time, whereas even in those early days people did not dine earlier than eleven, and of course it was only ten. Young Master Good-for-nothing, as his many friends called him, for he was a favourite in spite of his tricks—young Master Hans Holbein, for these were his two proper names—insisted however, that it behoved him above all things to be punctual, and off he would go from his work, which was that of a house painter and decorator. Had he been equally careful to obey the clock the next time it struck, it would of course have been all even and ship-shape, but he did not, and so while other people got their one hour's rest, he got two.

This was certainly very scandalous behaviour on the part of Master Hans, and his employers ought to

have put a stop to it. The only shadow of an excuse for him was, that when he did work, he worked with a will, and work it was, not all left-hand fingers and thumbs, like half the clumsy fellows of the same calling, but exquisite and dainty as you might wish to see, and so while everybody who employed him flew into a rage with him, everybody wanted him to work for them, and he had more work than he could get through, especially after the fashion he chose to do it.

One day it happened that an old apothecary named Popps thought his house and shop wanted painting up a bit, and so it did, for not a brush had touched it for years, and all its carved timber work was rotting, and the noses of the little stone cherubs chipping off, and for all that was to be seen of the row of fresco paintings that lay between the shop front and the first-floor windows, there might never have been any, for the very plaster hung down like turnip peelings.

"Paint me," said Apothecary Popps, when Hans arrived with his ladder and paint-pots and maul-sticks "Stay, let me see," and the old gentleman looked up meditatively at the now smooth clean plaster, "yes, in the middle there, we will have *Æsculapius*—if you know who that is," he added grandly

"Oh, yes! the god of medicine! I know him," said Hans confidently. "Not a bad sort of fellow in his way I expect Eh master?"

"And who told you about him?" said the apothecary.

"Dr Erasmus"

"Dr. Erasmus indeed! The great scholar stoop to chatter with a flibbertigibbet like you! What next I wonder?"

"Yes," said Hans, "as you say, what next? for *Æsculapius* won't take up all the room, judging by his portrait that Dr. Erasmus showed me in a book of his. He wasn't so fat as—as some apothecaries are now, and there will be three nice clean little spaces left, one on each side of the picture, and one below."

"Well, here then, you shall paint me the representation of the bird of *Æsculapius*"

"The bird?"

"Yes; by the pleasant fashions of those highly polite and civilized times, whose falling away is greatly to be regretted, it was a custom for patients to make an offering of a cock to *Æsculapius*. But for my part, I don't taste fowls six times a year, and when I do, I have to buy 'em"

"Ah! then perhaps you never cure anybody," said Hans. "And if you kill them, there's an end of all their giving"

"You don't know what you're talking about young man. If you really knew the great Dr Erasmus he could no doubt tell you, that the mighty philosopher

Socrates left particular orders with his friend Crito, to pay a cock to *Æsculapius* when he was dead "

"Of boiled hemlock. The wiseheads ordered him to be poisoned, didn't they?" said Hans

"Something like that, yes," nodded Popp.

"Well, if *Æsculapius*, or any of his sort, had a hand in brewing the stuff, which I expect was the case, I'd have cooked the cock, and eaten him myself if I had been Crito," said Hans, as he proceeded to mix his paints

"You talk great nonsense. Stick to your brushes, sir," said Popp severely. "And see, to match the cock, in the other corner, paint me a pestle and mortar, and don't be all day about it."

"Oh no!" said Hans, beginning to mount the ladder.

"A pestle and mortar will look delightful," went on Popp, rubbing his hands with satisfaction

"And, hi! see!" he called to Hans, now setting to work atop of the ladder. "Yes. In the blank space facing you, under *Æsculapius*, put a pair of forceps—pincers—as large as ever you can make 'em. That'll tempt all the folks to my shop, I'll warrant," went on the old gentleman gleefully. "As large as there's room for, do you hear?" he piped up at the top of his voice, as he turned indoors. "And mind, no shirking or truant-playing. I've my eye on you."

"All right!" nodded Hans

The apothecary's shop faced the fish-market, and Hans had not been long at work, before half the sellers and buyers, and all the idlers of the place, had stopped to watch what he was doing. But amusing as it was, none of them stopped long, for the day was a broiling hot one.

"Phew!" said they as they passed on, "if the poor fellow stops there much longer, he will be frizzled to a cinder."

"I say Hans," laughingly shouted up another, "why don't you ask old Poppo to give you a drink?"

"No thanks!" laughed back Hans, making a wry face, and working busily on at *Æsculapius'* sandalled toes. "None of his stuff for me. I shall be down presently."

"All right!" said the other, "I'll wait for you at the corner, and we'll go and have a cool tankard at the 'Goose,' and get a swim down by the St. Alban's Gate."

A cool tankard! How tempting it sounded in the scorched ears of Hans, baking up there on the top of the ladder. And the hours righteously counted, wanting one more—a whole sixty minutes to leaving-off time! Hans wiped the heat drops from his face, and glanced round.

Apothecary Poppo was gone in, possibly because he could not remain out any longer, for the heat.

"Here goes then!" said Hans to himself, and hey, presto! with a few rapid strokes of his brush, he had sketched upon the wall, between the scaffoldings, a pair of blue legs and red breeches, striped with brown, so marvellously like those he wore that they looked the very things. Then, leaving his paint-pots and paraphernalia where they were, he clapped his arms and reel live legs round the ladder, slid to the bottom of it, and was gone in a twinkling.

Scarcely had he done this than out came apothecary Poppo. "Ah, ah!" said he, looking up, and seeing the legs, "there you are friend Hans, that is what I like to see now. Work away my good fellow, work away." Then he went in to his dinner, and after that, finding the heat unendurable, he took an extra long forty winks.

But all that done, when he came out to see how his fresco was getting on, Hans had not come back. He was just coming however, and in his hurry, not seeing the old gentleman, he ran full tilt against him just at the foot of the ladder.

"Hallo!" gasped Poppo, staggering back as much from astonishment, as the force of Hans' sturdy body, "I thought you were—up—there!" and he pointed to the painted legs.

"Did you?" said Hans very gravely. "Well, I am going," and up he sprang out of harm's way.

"What are those?" cried Poppo.

"Those," said Hans "Ah, oh! Did you not bid me paint you a pair of forceps?"

"Forceps indeed!" growled Popps. "They are a great deal more like your good-for-nothing legs"

"Do you think so?" said Hans, beginning to paint them out. "Then that won't do at all I must try again.

"If at first you don't succeed,
Try again! try again!"

hummed he, and in a few moments the bulgy proportions all straightened down into the slim outlines of the most elegant, and perhaps the largest, pair of forceps ever seen

"Is that better, do you think?" he said, bending backward to contemplate this new effect.

"No matter what I think," grimly said Popps "Unless it is that I think you are an incorrigible rogue and vagabond; and I shall never employ you again"

"Well, it'll last a good hundred years, if it lasts a day. And since I've done my work, will it please you to pay for it?"

"Ay, ay!" said apothecary Popps, as he counted out Hans' wages "If you had your rights, that would be a good whipping."

CHAPTER II

THE GREAT DR. ERASMUS

THE story of Hans' trick on apothecary Popp spread like wildfire through Basel, greatly to the old gentleman's annoyance, for though it brought all sorts and conditions of curiosity-mongers to the outside of his shop to stare at the wonderful pictures on his house front, it sent very few inside. "I don't see," he grunted to his particular chums, "that all this expense I've gone to, has done me much good. I'm not sure indeed, that it hasn't done harm, for young Jackanapes Holbein has made such hideously real things of those tooth-drawers he has painted up there, that people shudder as they go by. I've seen 'em, and what's more, yesterday one idiot with his cheek puffed out as big as a small cabbage, mumbles 'No. thank you, sooner than have my teeth scrowged about with a thing like that, I'd put up with a hundred toothaches,' and on he goes. So what's the good of making things look nice? I've only put money into that Hans' pockets."

That was undoubtedly true, for Hans began to be in immense request, and very soon his fame reached the ears of the town-council, and they gave him an order to cover the front of the town-hall with frescoes.

This he did so thoroughly to their satisfaction, that they next thought how improved the fish-market would be by something of the same sort, and he set to work on the walls, and before long had painted a row of merry pictures of peasants dancing and enjoying themselves in the fields.

"How real it all looks!" admiringly said the clergyman of the church of St. Dominic. Thus Hans Holbein deserves to be encouraged. He shall paint a Dance of Death on the walls of my church, for time's fingers have rubbed out the old one, as a school-boy rubs out a drawing on his slate, and it is now nothing but a smeary shadow. And what is your church without its Dance of Death?"

That was true. Everybody in those days knew what a Dance of Death was. In France it was more generally called a Dance Macabre, a title which has long been a puzzle to students, its precise origin being unknown. It is supposed, however, that what was afterwards painted in a row of pictures, or in one long picture, was in earlier Christian times, a procession of real people dressed up to represent all sorts of characters, who marched along two by two, one of the two being always a skeleton, that is to say, the representation of one. Here went a king, there a beggar, next the Pope of Rome, or an emperor or lovely queen. Then perhaps a poor old man, after him a beautiful child or a youth, then a

clergyman, then an apothecary, then a miser, all dragged from their business or pleasure, or their good deeds or bad ones, by the bony hand of death, and led away into the unseen, rich, poor, happy, or wretched as they might be, for death ends all in this world.

Even at their best, these processions could hardly have been very seemly, and no doubt soon they grew to be riotous, and had to be done away with, but the great truth that all must die, had just the same to be kept in people's minds, and so the next idea was to paint it on the walls of the church or the churchyard, and in prayer-books in the illuminated borders round the pages.

There were few clever artists in those days who were not commissioned to paint these Dances of Death, and in many towns of France and Germany, and other countries of Europe, their remains are frequently to be seen.

When Hans had painted the Dance of Death, which of course took some time, he was wanted to decorate the cathedral organ. Of all his pictures some preferred however, those he painted on the town-hall, representing the story of the life and death of Jesus Christ. Among those who did so, was the learned professor of the university, Dr Erasmus, and one morning as Hans was crossing the broad open space in front of the town-hall, he saw Erasmus examining them very closely

"That is Dr Erasmus," said Hans to himself, and with no small pride and pleasure in his heart, for Hans was marvellously quick to read the thoughts of people in their faces, and if he read aright, Dr Erasmus was looking very approvingly.

For a moment Hans stood still, once he had spoken with the learned doctor, when he had had a little job of decorating to do in the university library, and while he was stealing a peep into a book that lay open on the table, Erasmus had chanced to come in, and seeing him interested, he had shown him some of the pictures contained in the book, which was about the heathen gods of old Greece, and that in fact, was how Hans had come to know about Æsculapius, which had so astonished apothecary Popps. Now there was nothing Hans had more a fancy for, than another little talk with Dr. Erasmus. He had seemed so kind and plain in his way of speaking, and not at all as if you were a lump of mud, and he a piece of gilt gingerbread, as some of the town-council big-wigs talked, and yet somehow, Hans, who was not very shy, and had very little fear of the town-council folks, rather hesitated before he ventured nearer to the professor, where he stood looking at his frescoes. At last however, he crossed the open space, and as he came near Erasmus, he lifted his cap respectfully, and said it was good weather.

"Excellent weather indeed," replied Erasmus. "And

these pictures of yours are admirable too Are they entirely your own conception?"

"Yes," replied Hans, "if you mean, as I suppose, are they all done out of my own head"

"Then by Jupiter, it can be no empty one! And for these hands," and Erasmus stretched out his own hand, and taking Holbein's warmly clasped it, "they deserve good measure put into them"

"And so please you, they always take care they have it," said Holbein, who could only think Erasmus meant ale or wine measure.

"Come, come!" laughed Erasmus, "it was the measure of honours and fair payment for your talents that I meant But tell me, when you leave your work to-day, where do you go?"

"So please you," replied Hans, "to the 'Goose,' as I go every day"

"It does not please me," gravely smiled Erasmus, "and you are the goose to go there"

"All my comrades go there," sighed Hans, "and I must bestow my company somewhere"

"Then for a change," said Erasmus, "what do you say to bestowing it on me to-night? I drink only at the fountain of learning, but you shall not find me so dry as some will have it that I am Will you come? I have some rare book-borderings sent me yesterday from the wood-graver's at Rotterdam, that I think you might like to see"

Hans' eyes sparkled with pleasure. "Right gladly I will come," he replied, and so for the time they parted

CHAPTER III.

THE PORTRAIT

THAT day when Dr. Erasmus and Hans Holbein met in front of the town-hall, was the beginning of a golden time for both. Years and years older than Hans, Erasmus was young in heart, and Hans, for all his harum-scarum ways, had a head that would not have disgraced older shoulders than his. The two became fast friends, and many an hour Hans used to spend after his day's work was done, in the quiet study of Dr. Erasmus, in his lodging by the University gate, instead of frittering the time away in strolling about, or drinking at the "Goose" as once he used to do.

Often after one of those long pleasant chats with his learned friend about anything and everything under the sun, Hans used to go home through the silent streets, thinking to himself what hosts upon hosts of things there were to know—and if only one knew them! One thing he did come to know, which he had not learnt when he spent all his time at the "Goose," and that was his own ignorance, and how

if one was ever to be anything better than a mere clever dauber, it was necessary to be as much of a scholar as one could

"I do believe there is nothing in the wide world you do not know," said Hans once to Erasmus, after he had been asking him all sorts of questions about Rome and Greece, and Xerxes, and King Haroun Alraschid, and Caesar, and Solomon, and what the sun was made of, and a thousand such-like things, "nothing you do not know."

"Nothing I do know," gravely said Erasmus, "or next to nothing"

"They say you are one of the cleverest persons in the world," said Hans, as gravely contemplating his companion.

"That may be," said Erasmus, "for it is not saying much."

"Some will have it," continued Hans, looking a little puzzled, "that the Pope of Rome himself is not so learned as you."

"Why, that is very likely," laughed Erasmus

"And some say that even Dr Luther, and Dr Melanchthon, and Dr Bucer all together are not so wise as you"

"That is possible too," said Erasmus with a shrug of his bent shoulders, "though I believe it is much of a muchness Hans. 'To every man his gift,' say the Scriptures, and mine, I take it, is in the study with

my quiet friends the books, since I never had strong health, while Dr. Luther was born to make a noise in the world."

"Ay; and he does not fail at it. You can hear him a mile off. Is that why folks call him the Wittenberg Bull?"

"One reason perhaps," said Erasmus

"I am not fond of such boisterous folks," said Hans, as his eyes rested on the quiet thoughtful face of his friend. "They are too much like a flaring picture."

"Nor I," replied Erasmus. "But they are sometimes exceedingly useful. But talking of pictures Hans, I have been thinking—what say you to painting mine?"

"I too have thought a great deal about that," said Hans, turning delighted eyes on Erasmus, "but I dared not ask you"

"Not ask me! Why not?" said Erasmus.

"I feared to attempt it, lest I might fail."

"That is not like you," smiled Erasmus. "It would be nothing so difficult for your clever fingers, a few wrinkles, a few gray hairs—"

"And a something that makes your face so beautiful behind all these, that I fear no skill of mine can reproduce with a poor bit of paint, but I should rarely like to try"

"I design it for a present to an old friend."

"In Basel?"

"No; in England."

"Ah, that's an odd country, England, isn't it? Full of queer people."

"Yes. Sometimes I think it is the proper place for you. And the English people are very fond of pictures."

"I don't think I care to leave Basel," said Hans
"What should I do away from—"

"The Goose?" laughed Erasmus

"And you, yes," admitted Hans sorrowfully

"As for the 'Goose,' there are plenty of geese in England."

"Now you are laughing at me," grumbled Hans
"But I was thinking of kind good friends"

"There is one there," more seriously said Erasmus,
"who for good old friendship's sake with me, would be a friend to you. The noblest kindest man who ever breathed."

"The King of England do you mean?" said Hans, who had heard from many in Basel what high-born company had been eager to entertain Erasmus in his many travels in Europe.

"Henry! No," said Erasmus a little tartly, "no, certainly not. His chancellor, Sir Thomas More"

"But about your portrait," said Hans, who was quite content with his life in Basel. "When may I begin?"

"Oh, to-morrow, if you have leisure."

"I can find it for that," said Hans

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW BOOK.

THE painting of Dr Erasmus' portrait went on very well indeed. Hans took more pains over it, than over anything he had ever done in his life, which was however, still quite a young one.

He would not always take pains in those days, and his love of ease, and of what he called "pleasure" sometimes brought him into a great deal of trouble, because it made his work behind time, and people refused to pay him as much as they had been ready to do if he had been punctual. Then too, a great deal of the money he did receive was spent in a very foolish way; that is to say, a great deal too much of it went into the till of the landlord of the "Goose," or of the "Cap and Bells," or the "Mousetrap," and other ale-houses of Basel.

There might be some little excuse for Hans, for he was a bright-witted, sociable fellow, and people liked his company, and in those days there were very few books to read which were not either very dry and solemn, or else very nonsensical; and it was something the same with music. It was all very solemn, such as is used in church, or else it was a noisy rollicking tintangle, with very little melody.

Erasmus was greatly grieved to see Hans behave so foolishly, and strove his best to keep him from it; and in a measure he succeeded. He was for ever telling him that he ought to turn over a new leaf, and one day Hans came to him with a very demure face, and said that at last he had done so, but when Erasmus found the sort of leaf it was, he looked far graver than Hans, for Hans had married, and as it soon turned out, had a very bad wife. This was just what Erasmus feared, for Hans had married his old housekeeper's niece, and the housekeeper had told Erasmus that the young woman was unthrifty, and ill-tempered, and not at all one to make Hans happy at home, or keep him steady and fond of his work, as a good industrious wife might have managed to do, if he must have a wife, which Erasmus considered was not at all needful.

Hans' wife took no interest in his painting, although she liked the money his work brought, to buy her fine clothes to deck herself out with, and then her loud tongue and shrewish ways had the effect of hunting him out of the house, and sending him more than ever to the "Goose," running up a ruinous score there.

"You ought to try and stay more at home," said Dr Erasmus one day to him. "There is no rose without a thorn," he went on, trying to excuse the woman.

"But there seem to be plenty of thorns without roses," said Hans. "There were a few roses at first, but they all dropped off in no time, and it isn't all my fault," protested Hans. "It isn't I assure you, Dr Erasmus, I'm a—I'm—"

"A troublesome customer"

"Well, I'm not perfect I daresay, but I'd like to do right"

"I believe that," nodded Erasmus.

"And study and paint, and all that! but who could, with such a tongue in the house? You can hear it a mile off; and clack, clack, clack, it goes, like a mill-clapper I expect she's just another—you know whom I mean Dr. Erasmus—the woman that other stupid fellow married, Xan—Xant—what the mischief was her name?"

"Xantippe, the wife of Socrates, the great philosopher You call him a stupid fellow," said Erasmus indignantly "The wisest man that ever lived"

"Not wise enough to choose a good wife anyhow," said Hans "So you can't blame me Dr. Erasmus, for I never set up to be anything I don't wonder at him not minding to be in prison, for at all events, he was out of Xantippe's way there I suppose. Often I think I could run to the end of the world, if she didn't run after me, and I don't think she would. She doesn't care for me much, I am quite sure."

"Oh, you foolish, foolish Hans!" said Erasmus

sadly, as he absently turned over the leaves of a book before him with a sad smile

"What have you there?" asked Hans, always ready to forget his troubles when he could

"A book for you," said Erasmus

"For me?" delightedly asked Hans "Is it the one you have been writing this long time?"

"Yes," said Erasmus "My *Moriae Encomium*," he added, smiling at the long face Hans pulled, as he generally did when he heard a word of Latin or Greek.

"But what is the double Dutch of it?" said Hans.

"Double Dutch! you mean High Dutch?" said Erasmus

"It's much the same thing," said the daring Hans "And, anyhow, is it enough like my mother's tongue for me to understand it?"

"Oh, never fear!" said Erasmus "I have caused it to be put into the vulgar tongue"

"Vulgar tongue?"

"German, so that the greatest dunce may read it. It is rather good reading for dunces"

"Why, so I should say," said Hans, opening his new book and peeping into it, "for I see in the vulgar tongue as you call it Dr Erasmus, it is called *The Praise of Folly* Now that must be a good book."

"I hope so," said Erasmus, "and when you have crowned it, it will be better still."

"I?" said Hans, "I don't understand."

"Take it home with you, and then perhaps you may," said Erasmus, still quietly smiling.

CHAPTER V.

GOOD ADVICE.

ONE evening a short time after that, Hans Holbein entered Dr. Erasmus' study with *The Praise of Folly* in his hand

"I have crowned your work," he said, as he advanced through the shadows of the room into the lamp-light. "See whether you like it." Then he drew back rather abashed, for he perceived that Erasmus had a visitor with him, a handsome young gentleman, whose slender and yet stately figure was attired in rich garments

"Nay, come forward Hans," said Erasmus. "This my lord," he went on, turning to the gentleman, "is the young friend of whom I was speaking to you, Hans Holbein, and though for the first time," he went on, addressing Hans, "you see the Earl of Surrey in the flesh, you know him well, do you not Hans?"

"Indeed you have stood well pictured in my mind

from Dr Erasmus' fair report," said Hans, bowing low to the young English nobleman

"I do well," said the earl, returning the salutation with great and winning courtesy, "to be so honourably considered" Then seeing that Erasmus had taken the book from Hans' hands, and was turning over its pages with looks of deep interest and curiosity, "Some new work, Dr Erasmus?" he inquired.

"A recent one my lord," replied Erasmus "*My Praise of Folly*"

"Ay, ay," said the nobleman in pleased expectant tones, holding out his hand for it

"And illustrated it would seem, by my friend Hans here," went on Erasmus, giving the book to the earl. "I bade him crown my poor work."

"And richly he seems to have done it," laughed the earl, "with a wealth of fool's caps!" and at every page he turned, he laughed more heartily, snatching between times more than one look at the roguish Hans, who stood grave as old Time, and with downcast eyes, as if he was not able to say as much as "Bo" to a goose

There was as great a craze in those days for writing and reading books wherein the various knaveries, or the foolish ways of human beings are shown up, as there is in these People never seemed to tire of laughing at themselves, or rather at their neighbours, for of course they themselves never did anything

wrong or stupid. One famous writer, named Sebastian Brandt, not very long before, had written such a book, and called it *The Ship of Fools*. It is a curious book, full of queer pictures, with verses describing their meaning beneath; and not the least queer of the pictures is its frontispiece, which represents a huge ship floating on the waves, loaded with passengers, every one of them wearing a fool's cap. None of them look exactly as if they know where they are going, let us hope it is to some land where plenty of wisdom fruit grows.

When the preachers wanted something to make a sermon about, they often chose one of the follies set forth in Sebastian Brandt's book.

Dr Erasmus' new book was something of the same kind, but it had no pictures. Hans however, soon set this to rights in his copy, and drew a picture to illustrate each different subject Erasmus had written about in his work, and where there had not been space to draw them in the margin of the page, Hans had done them on little slips of paper, and pasted them on the edge, and so wonderfully clever all these pictures were, that it was no wonder Erasmus and Lord Surrey laughed so heartily over them.

"It takes a wise head to make so many fools," said the earl at last, for he was very witty and learned himself, and felt full of admiration for Hans Holbein's humorous ideas, as well as for the beautiful work of

his hands "You must be held in great esteem here Master Holbein," he added

"So, so," said Erasmus, answering for Hans, who seemed not to know what to say in reply "But Basel, after all is said and done, is not a large place, and, 'tis like Chanticleer and his jewel, with the folks in it, they do not know how rightly to prize the treasures they have."

"Master Holbein should come to England," said the earl "His majesty, as you well know, loves pictures, and would give him a royal welcome."

"As I have often told Hans," said Erasmus, "but I fear he too is like Chanticleer in his way, for he sets not such value on his talent, as he is well entitled to do, and he pays my counsel no heed, and persists in his own ways"

"And what is that?" asked the Earl.

"Something like this," said Erasmus, pointing to one of Hans' pictures, "for here certainly Hans has drawn himself"

The earl smiled a little, and yet looked very grave as he glanced at the picture, which represented a broad-shouldered fellow, with his arms embracing a beer jug, and talking nonsense with a silly-looking girl. "Hans prefers this manner of passing his time, instead of making himself famous," continued Erasmus, and as he spoke he took his pen and wrote under the picture "Hans Holbein"

"I am truly sorry," said the earl, "to think gifts so great should be wasted; for Heaven saves them for the few, though indeed it is but natural for the flame to dwindle or drop away, where it is not well nourished. I am persuaded Master Holbein, that England is the proper place for you."

But Hans, who was vexed with Erasmus for exposing his folly, replied rather sulkily.

"But if Dr Erasmus is to be trusted, my lord, learned and respected as he is, your country treated him scurvily when he left its shores, and if it could do so to him, what would become of me?"

"How?" said the earl.

"Oh!" smiled Erasmus, "that is true in a way. The custom-house officers at Dover seized my money by mistake—"

"Mistake forsooth!" cried the earl.

"Ay, they believed it to be English coin; and that is not allowed to be taken out of the country, but it was not English coin. Still they would not listen to my explanations, but took it, leaving me penniless when I reached Paris, whither I was bound."

"And what did you do?" asked the earl. "By my faith! these Jacks in office who exceed their duties, should be crowned with one of Master Hans' fools' caps. What did you do?"

"Having no money I expect I must have starved, but for quickly getting together a book of wise saws,

adages, and proverbs, and selling it to a printer, who sold it very well."

"Ay, the *Adagia*," said the earl. "Who does not know them?"

"And here you see Dr Erasmus at his work, my lord," said Hans, showing the earl another picture in the book—of a musty old bookworm scraping up all sorts of dusty old papers, and learned odds and ends, under which he had hastily written *Adagia*.

But Erasmus only smiled at Hans' little bit of malice for what he had told the earl of his laziness.

"Which of us is the more foolish?" went on Hans. "I, who run no dangers, but stay at home and enjoy myself—"

"If you do," said the earl, looking keenly at Hans, "if it be real enjoyment."

Hans wriggled uneasily, but he continued—"Or Dr Erasmus, who spends all his time in racking his brains to content other folks."

"Why, that is quickly answered," said Erasmus, "for I shall be remembered when I am dead—for a little while."

"For all time," said the earl. "Some day you will have your statue set up."

"Statues can't feel," objected Hans. "It wouldn't make me more comfortable, if I had fifty statues of me set up, and if I want pictures of myself, I can make any number by copying what I see in a glass."

The earl shrugged his shoulders. Time was, of course, better spent than in arguing with such a happy-go-lucky fellow as this.

"It is none the less a pity you should see it all so, Master Hans, who have power to do so much."

And though for a long time after that Hans drowsed and daundered on in the same indolent way, often he saw in his mind the Earl of Surrey's handsome earnest face, and his eyes gravely fixed on him, and he seemed to hear his pleasant and yet chiding tones bidding him bestir himself.

CHAPTER VI.

A BLUE-BOTTLE.

EVERY year now began to make things worse for Hans. The holes in his wife's temper grew wider and wider, and his little family grew larger and larger, and the money in his purse shrank smaller and smaller, until it became next to nothing. Then at last he began to think seriously. How he wished now he had taken that advice of the Earl of Surrey, and gone to England, and one day he gathered courage, and told his only true friend, Dr Erasmus, all that was in his mind.

"And it is never too late to mend," said Erasmus

"Lose no more time, but start at once You shall carry with you a letter of introduction from me to my good friend Sir Thomas More, and I warrant he will receive you kindly, and that you shall not go begging in London."

But on his way there poor Hans did go begging very much. He was too proud to tell Erasmus that he had no more money than what he must leave behind for the wants of his family, and perhaps he was right, for Erasmus was a long way from being as rich in purse as he was in learning, and so it came about that one florin was all Hans had in his pocket when he left Basel.

It was a sad parting between Hans and Erasmus, for they loved each other dearly, and when the time to bid farewell came at last, Hans fell on his friend's bosom, and wept bitterly, and Erasmus said tearfully

"I shall miss thee little Hans," for so he always called the big sturdy fellow, "coming in with thy jests and nonsense"

"And I," sobbed Hans, "your grave words and good counsel. But for you I must have been a ne'er-do-weel indeed Now I feel there is still some good in me"

"There is much," said Erasmus "Go, improve thy talents little Hans, so that when perchance as an old man, or a young one still, or one of middle age, or however it may be, as in your pictures, death shall

come, and taking thee by the hand, to lead thee to thy rest, thy Lord will say, 'Well done, faithful servant' Go now, courage, and let me have news of thee."

And so, cheering up a bit as he trudged along, Hans Holbein set out. He had not got a league from Basel before he felt very thirsty, and changed his florin at a roadside ale-house. After that, lending a hand with a timber-laden barge, he got a free lift down the Rhine to Strasburg. There he met an old crony who was now settled, or rather unsettled, in the city, with a wife of the same pattern as Mrs Hans. The two dined together, and as the crony (who had less coin in his pockets than even Hans had, and who, five days out of the week's seven, usually dined off the smell of other people's dinners, as it was wafted through the doors about which he happened to be idling) had an excellent appetite, Hans paid for both their dinners, and that quite cleared his pockets.

The thing now was, where was Hans to find a night's lodging? The crony said something about his sleeping at his house, though not very much, and Hans politely thanked him, but said he had rather not, and that there was nothing he more enjoyed than walking about all night in the open air, but he forgot the time of year for the moment when he spoke. It was quite the early spring, and when night came on he was glad to creep away into the porch of the cathedral, and

began to wish himself back again in Basel for all its faults.

However, the martans in the fretted stonework overhead chirruped cheerily when he awoke and stretched himself, for he was as stiff as a piece of cardboard.

"Have a good heart, little Hans, have a good heart," they seemed to say, and he took a turn or two in the cathedral close, while he thought what must be done next, when whom should he run full tilt against but the crony again.

"Well," said he, when Hans told him his trouble, "if I had your brains and fingers, I shouldn't be long like I am. See now, one good turn deserves another. That was a nice dinner we had yesterday. I shouldn't mind another like it again to-day, but that's neither here nor there."

"No indeed it isn't," said Hans ruefully. "Nor breakfast neither. And I'm at my wits' end what to be doing."

"I'll tell you," said the crony. "You see yonder house across the close. Well, it's inhabited by Brusch, the great portrait-painter. You've heard of him?"

"It's not his fault if I haven't," laughed Hans. "Go on. Yes, I've heard of Brusch."

"Well, he's got an order to paint the portraits of all the big-wigs in Strasbourg."

"Is it a large family?" asked Hans.

"Thunder-weather! how dull you are!" said the crony impatiently. "I mean the great guns"

"You said big-wigs just now."

"The town-council man," shouted the crony. "Every man jack of them, from the mayor downwards No end of a job There's such a deal of flesh-tint to work in, and Brusch is tired out; but he's afraid to give any of it to do to a nobody, for fear it might be bungled, and then there'd be a pretty kettle of fish, but if you tell him who you are, he might give you a turn at it"

"Thanks!" said Hans, "I'll try anyhow," and across the road he went, and knocked at the great portrait-painter's door

"What do you want?" said Brusch, who happened to be coming out, and opened the door himself

"A job of work so please you, if you could employ me," said Hans, cap in hand.

"What's your name?"

"If 'twere as big as yours and as well paid for," said Hans in wheedling tones, "I might be glad to tell it."

"Well, come, that's modest at all events," said Brusch, not ill-pleased. "Where do you come from?"

"Basel"

"Ah! Then you have seen the great painter, Hans Holbein? Know him perhaps?"

"A little," said Hans. "I've learnt a few things from him now and again"

"A pupil of his?" said Brusch with growing politeness.

"N—no Not precisely a pupil."

"Ah, well! I like people to be candid. If you were not his pupil, you weren't, but I daresay you've picked up something worth knowing from him. Come in a moment," and Brusch led Hans into his studio. "You see this person," he said, stopping before the half-finished portrait of a portly old gentleman, clad in a scarlet gold-embroidered gown."

"Yes," said Hans, for the portrait was as large as life.

"That's our burgomaster. You see his nose?"

"Yes," said Hans, for it looked a trifle larger than life. "Isn't it rather a big one?"

"There it is now!" said Brusch. "That's what it's owner says, and mightily annoyed he is about it, and I've painted it out and in, and in and out, till there'll be a hole in the canvas soon. See what you can make of it."

"But I don't know the real nose," objected Hans, taking up the palette, and setting to work nevertheless.

"Oh, it's just a plain nose! Ah, you're hitting it!" Brusch cried admiringly. "Bless my soul! and to think how I've hammered and hammered! Go on, go on! So, yes. Don't overdo the vermilion."

"Wait a bit," said Hans, looking over his colours

"I don't like to be hurried. You were going out, weren't you?"

"Yes. There's a feast at the town-hall, and I'm one of the distinguished guests."

"Then, pray go," for Brusch was fidgeting about in a distracting manner. "I'll finish it off all right."

"You're a clever fellow, and I should like to engage you. What will you take?" said Brusch.

"All you'll give me," said Hans. "But I prefer to work by the piece. Pay me for this nose, and then there'll be an end of it."

"And after that we'll strike a fresh bargain. Yes?"

"You can talk about that to-morrow. Pay me for this, and I'll astonish you with it. Oh, never fear, I won't leave it till I've done it. Trust me."

"Good!" said Brusch, and taking out his purse he laid down a gold piece. "But remember I'm not going on paying at that rate," he added. "I don't mind telling you however that a great deal depends on that nose, and I shall enjoy the entertainment much better for having the weight of it off my mind. Farewell, till we meet again!"

"Till we meet again," replied Hans, painting on industriously, and away went Master Brusch.

Just about sundown he returned in high good-humour, having enjoyed himself very much.

"I wonder whether that clever fellow is still at his work!" he said, looking in at his studio door, but all

was still "Ah, ha!" he went on, as the red sun-rays streamed in full on the burgomaster's portrait, with its finished nose "Upon my word it is perfection. Come off there! dragging your ugly black legs all over the wet colour!" and he took out his handkerchief and carefully flicked at a great blue-bottle fly which had settled on the tip of the burgomaster's nose "Come, off with you I say!"

But the blue-bottle did not budge. In fact it was not a blue-bottle at all, only an exquisitely-painted picture of one

For a long time Master Brusch stood lost in astonishment, and hardly knew whether to be in a tremendous rage, or lose his wits with delight and admiration of such wonderful work

"I hear it buzz-buzz, surely I do!" he said, listening "Oh, you villain, you rogue!" he cried, rushing out into the street, "only let me catch you!" and he seized the first person he met by the throat. It happened to be the cory

"Come, come, Master Brusch! Do you want to strangle me?" he gurgled out "Hands off! What's the matter?"

"I'm sure I beg your pardon," said Brusch "It isn't you I want. It's that rascal—that conjuror, magician—journeyman painting fellow, who came asking for work this afternoon at my door What the mischief has become of him?"

"Ha, ha!" laughed the crony.

"What are you laughing at, you idiot? You know where he's gone"

"To be sure I do Miles off on his way to England Didn't I drink a good journey to him in a parting bumper that he paid for out of his earnings! And sorry I am he's gone, for we don't get such fellows hereabouts every day of the week as Hans"

"Hans! Hans what?"

"Hans Holbein to be sure Didn't you know?"

"Hans Holbein!" gasped Bruschi. "I might have guessed it!"

CHAPTER VII

UP THE RIVER.

VERY much after the fashion in which Hans found his way from Basel to Strasburg, he made it to Rotterdam, where he had a message to deliver from Dr Erasmus to an old friend, who received Hans very kindly, and showed him all over the curious town, with its canals crowded with boats and shipping, whose masts towered like bare trees above the tall pointed house-roofs. What still more interested Hans was the house where his dear friend Erasmus was born He made two sketches of it, one for himself, and

one to give to Sir Thomas More along with the portrait which Erasmus had intrusted to him for the great lord chancellor. Then he bade farewell to his hospitable entertainer, who obtained for him a passage free to England in a trading vessel.

The sea was very rough all the way, and Hans was not sorry when the little ship reached the smooth broad reaches of the Thames. The flat marshland on either side seemed to him as if it was just a piece more of the country he had left a day or two before, and Hans, who loved beautiful country, and had heard so much about the loveliness of the Thames banks, was very much disappointed, and said so to the captain of the ship, who only smiled and replied, "Wait till you are higher up." And Hans waited, only seeing very slow improvement, but when he came in sight of Greenwich, he forgot for a while about the banks in his admiration of a large handsome building standing near the water, surrounded with fair gardens and terraces, which were crowded with persons who, as well as he could see from the river, were richly attired. They were going up and down great flights of marble steps, where they landed from the gaily-painted pleasure-boats, and sounds of music floated across the water.

"That is a fine place," said Hans, cheering up. "What is it?"

"The king's palace of Greenwich," said the captain.

"It is his favourite pleasure-palace; though some say he would really prefer Hampton Court, which however, is not his, but my lord Cardinal Wolsey's. If that is so, it is the old tale, and his majesty is no better than the rest of us, who always covet what is not ours, and the king—but stay—" said the captain, interrupting himself, and looking as if he would like to recall his last words, lest the mischievous breeze might have wafted them too far. "You are in luck, for here comes his gracious majesty. And still in greater luck," excitedly went on the captain, as a richly-gilded barge, rowed by twelve rowers clad in scarlet and gold, glided swiftly along the sunlit water, "for see, he hath the queen beside him, fair Mistress Anne."

"I thought the English queen's name had been Katherine," said Hans, taking off his cap, as all the crew did, as the barge glided past a little distance off.

"That shows you must have come out of the ark for the Dutchman you are," laughed the captain. "Katherine was his wife; but that was seven weeks ago, for Anne has been queen so long. See how he whispers in her ear and smiles!"

"She is very fair," said Hans admiringly. "But tell me, when did Queen Katherine die?"

"Ah, she is not precisely dead."

"Not dead! But—"

"Oh, plague seize thy foolish questions! Hurrah,

hurrah! Off with thy cap again sirrah! Hurrah! God save the queen!"

"Why, so say I—God save her of course!" slowly said Hans, still looking mystified, and inwardly wondering which queen the man meant, or whether it was both. Then he sat down on a heap of cargo, and was as silent as a log, till suddenly his wide-open eyes caught sight of a gray-walled moated building surrounded with massive walls. "Thunder-weather!" he cried, "what is that?"

"The Tower," replied the captain.

"Tower! Why, there are four towers if I can count."

"All the same 'tis called the Tower, and has been since Julius Cæsar set up the first of 'em."

"Is it another palace?"

"'Tis what you please to call it," said the captain, who had enough to do to keep his ship clear of all the craft crowding the river. "Some folks hold it a less pleasant one than Greenwich, but it accommodates many of his majesty's friends from time to time."

"But," once more began the inquisitive Hans.

"Ah! a truce to your questions friend, for here we are at London Bridge, and go no further."

"Is this Chelsea then?" shouted Hans, half-deafened by the noise of the river rushing beneath the arches, and the shouts of the boatmen as they steered safe of the whirling water.

"Save you no!" shouted back the captain; "but I will set you on your way thither. Hi!" he called, beckoning to a small boat moored by the stairs of the bridge. "Here is a fare for you friend," he went on as the boatman rowed up alongside. "This gentleman is for my lord Chancellor's at Chelsea, and see you conduct him and his luggage thither safely; for you never rowed more valuable freight." The boatman touched his cap respectfully.

"Fare-you-well," said Hans as he jumped into the boat with his wallet, and his pictures tied carefully up in a cloth, "and a thousand thanks for your kindness!"

"Good luck to you!" said the skipper, waving his hand. "Yo ho! aloft there!" and he turned away.

"Have you all your luggage?" asked the boatman, eyeing Hans' little wallet.

"For the moment, yes," replied Hans, "the rest is to follow." And away went the boat on its way to Chelsea, where the boatman was to land him at the water stairs fronting the avenue.

Hans' senses for the next few moments were entirely absorbed in wondering how he should ever come alive to the other side of the arches of the bridge, the whirl of water through them and the uproar were so overwhelming. When however, he was at last able to look round him, he was lost in admiration of all the beautiful houses and churches covering the river

banks. They were too many and close together to ask questions about, but the boatman pointed out to him the long row of buildings composing the palace of Whitehall, which but lately he said, had belonged to my lord Cardinal Wolsey, who had made a present of it to the king. Then across the water he showed him the red walls of Lambeth, and so the houses grew fewer and farther between, with here and there a mill or a farm standing in the midst of the meadows. Then, passing the herb gardens of Battersea, a turn of the river brought the boat in sight of one of the goodliest pictures Hans thought he had ever seen in all his life. "There is where you are bound for," said the boatman, "my lord chancellor, Sir Thomas More's house." But he needed scarcely to say that for Hans to recognize it. How many a time Dr. Erasmus had described it to him! and there, good sooth, it stood just as he had said. "*Neither mean nor subject to envy, yet commodious and magnificent enough,*" with its spacious garden, and long raised terraces, and goodly out-buildings, of which a portion made the chapel, and all partially screened by an avenue reaching from the main door to the river's brink, where a flight of broad steps, washed by the clear lapping water, offered a landing-place.

"It looks restful," thought the weary traveller to himself, as the boat glided up alongside the steps. "Had I my choice given me, I think I had liefer spend

my days here than at gay Greenwich. How soft and fresh-looking lies the sward under the blue sky, with the broad shadows of the mighty trees fringing the margin of the stream, where those stately fellows, the swans glide as if they were lords of the demesne! See how close they come!" smiled Hans, as the birds, arching their long slender necks, sailed up round the very bows of the boat.

"Ay, they are of my lord's large family of dumb creatures," said the boatman, "whom his own hand loves to feed, and they are no doubt bidding your worship welcome."

"Hark!" said Hans, as through the calm evening air came the chime of a sweet-toned bell.

"That is the chapel bell. It is the hour of even-song with the family," said the boatman, "and all who list may join in it. 'Tis but a prayer, and a psalm, or a chapter, and lasts but a short time. Shall I carry your luggage to the house?"

"Nay, thanks!" said Hans, "it is not heavy, and I can find my way alone."

"Thank your honour! long life to your honour!" said the boatman, pocketing his fare, which Hans paid him out of the last change of his gold piece.

CHAPTER VIII

A WELCOME.

WHEN Hans knocked at the door he saw facing him at the end of the avenue, it was opened by a gray-haired servitor, who desired him to enter and wait a little while till his master should be in.

Very soon the door opened and a gentleman entered, closely followed by a huge black-and-white mastiff dog, who looked at him and sniffed a little, then looked at his master, who said "It is all right, good Roland," upon which the dog couched with his nose on his outstretched paws.

As to Roland's master, Hans thought he had never beheld a nobler looking man. His slightly bent and fragile figure was clad in a rich but sober gown of black velvet, and a small velvet cap of the same material covered the long silvery hair which shaded a grave thoughtful face full of benevolence. He looked inquiringly at Hans, who, after his usual fashion, had not given his name, but had said he was from Holland, and desired to see Sir Thomas on important business. Now Sir Thomas thought it was late that day for business, for he looked upon the close of day as the time for a little rest and recreation. Nevertheless he never permitted anyone to be

sent from his door without first learning what they wanted of him.

"If you have business with Sir Thomas More, I am he," he said.

"I bring you this," said Hans, putting on his best manners, which were good enough to pass anywhere, and only wanted a little more using to make them better still; then he placed the letter he had brought from Erasmus in the hands of Sir Thomas, who cried in glad tones. "From Erasmus! And how fares my old friend?" he asked as he hastily broke the seal of his letter and opened it

"Well, sir, when we parted five days ago—" replied Hans

"*'The bearer of this,'* read out Sir Thomas, *'is my dear friend Hans Holbein.'* Why then indeed," said Sir Thomas, stretching out his hand, and warmly clasping Holbein's, "not alone for my friend's sake, but for your own are you right welcome, for your fame has long preceded you to England. But to my letter, *'I pray you of your courtesy bestow on him your countenance.'* Ay, gladly," smiled Sir Thomas with a merry twinkle in his eye. "But you are loaded Master Holbein," he went on, observing a square package Hans kept tightly tucked under his arm. "Set down your burden"

"'Tis Dr. Erasmus' countenance he desires to bestow on you," said Hans, removing the swathings

of the package, "and I was not to rest till I had delivered it to you, and asked you if you think it a good counterfeit?" Then he set the portrait against a chair back.

Sir Thomas started with surprise as he looked at it, and his eyes shone with tears which nearly brimmed over. "Truly it seems hardly a counterfeit at all," he said, "but as if in a moment Erasmus must speak to me. And who is the painter of this wondrous work?"

"I, so please you," said Hans, looking mightily pleased himself, for such praise from such a man was praise indeed.

"Then, indeed, for all that has been told me of your skill by travellers, it is short of the deserving. But come, we will go to supper, for if you have travelled so straight, you have had but pilgrim's fare, and must be tired and hungry. As it falls out, I am alone to-night," continued Sir Thomas, as he led the way to an inner chamber, where a small but bright fire burned on the hearth, and shone cheerily on a table laid with a goodly array of silver platters and goblets of Venice glass, "for my daughter and her husband Roper, sup with friends at Battersea, and the rest are scattered. Oh! I cry you mercy!" smiled Sir Thomas, as Hans' eyes fell on a matronly-looking tabby-cat perched, gravely expectant, on the arm of Sir Thomas' huge tall-backed chair at the head of

the table "The company of my four-footed friends never fails me, and I must make them known to you, since if I can read faces, you love 'dumb beasts' as it is the fashion to call them. And since ladies come first, this is Madam Hika Pikra," and as Sir Thomas took his place, he stroked the glossy back of the cat, who rose politely in response, twisted her sleek body about a bit, flourished her tail, and sat down again more solemnly expectant than before. "And this," he went on, turning to the dog seated on his haunches beside him, and who lovingly licked the slender hand, "is Roland, my brave Roland, grim and a trifle sour perhaps, to those who love not him or his master; but to his master's friends, an amiable and courtly gentleman. I bid you cultivate his acquaintance, for it is most profitable. And now, fall to, Master Holbein."

Then he said a brief grace in Latin, which Hans' learning did not quite stretch to understanding word for word, but which was uttered with such simple reverence, that it made him feel more grateful for Heaven's good gifts than ever he had done in his life.

"And does England strike you favourably?" said Sir Thomas, after a brief silence spent by him in dissecting a fine sturgeon stuffed with parsley, for which Hans found an excellent appetite, "the little you have seen of it," he added.

"It was little enough through the fog and mists," replied truthful Hans, "till the sun came out brightly

just as we neared Greenwich, where the king's palace is. It looked gay enough there "

"Ah!" said Sir Thomas, "yes, Greenwich is a fair place I used greatly to enjoy myself when I visited there."

"Do you not do so now?" asked Hans

"For these three months past, I have not been there," replied Sir Thomas

"But to the Tower—" began Hans, airing his newly-acquired knowledge

"Save you man!" smiled Sir Thomas "The Tower is but little of a pleasure-palace now, if ever it were, which I can hardly imagine, but since Richard of Gloucester caused his two young innocent nephews to be murdered there, their ghosts are said to haunt its passages, and the place is fallen into deeper ill-repute than ever For my part, I would never dwell in the Tower of my own free will and pleasure "

"But when you visit his majesty, as you must so frequently do—"

"Not frequently Only when my duty to his majesty demands it Then I repair to Whitehall at Westminster Or by preference, and the king permits, to Bridewell, near the Black Friars "

"And the queen? Do you see her?"

"The queen is at Kimbolton, and sees no one "

"You mistake," said Hans. "She is at Greenwich. The skipper of the boat I came in, pointed her out to

me this morning, seated in the royal barge by Henry's side."

"It is you who mistake friend," coldly said Sir Thomas "It was Mistress Anne Bullen you saw The queen, I tell you—Katherine of Arragon—lies sick of a breaking heart a hundred miles away. Enough —Foul befall your ill-breeding, madam! Dabbing your velvet paw into the platter," laughingly chided Sir Thomas to the cat, who was impatiently waiting for the plate her master was heaping with remains of fish, and detained beyond reasonable time, thus reminded him "Are these your company manners? If you can comport yourself no better than that, you shall go to supper with Poke and Snatch in the scullery."

"Poke and Snatch!" said Hans.

"A pet weasel and ferret, who are excellent fellows, but keep a separate table Ah, so! Have you found your good manners again?" went on the master with a smile of amusement, as he set down the plate on a mat near, and the cat and the mastiff fell to at it. "Well, keep your own side, and Roland is to be trusted for keeping his I was saying Master Hans," went on Sir Thomas, when Hans had watched with amused eyes the contents of the platter fairly cleared, "that since Dr Erasmus and I took our sweet counsel together under the trees of yonder garden," and he pointed through the half-open lattice to the terraces

and shady walks bathed in the last rays of the setting sun, "time's changes have been at work, but we do not all change with time, and my quiet old home here is dearer to me than ever"

"It may well be so," said Hans

"But we will talk no more You shall to bed, for you can but have slept poorly in the rough cradle of the sea. There is a bed-chamber that stands always in readiness for my chance guests My servant shall light you to it."

"I am greatly beholden to you—" began Hans

"Nay, you are my friend's ambassador, and if you owe me any debt of entertainment, we will discuss its payment to-morrow, when you are rested and refreshed. Good-night, and dreamless sleep—or if dreams must come, may they be fair ones"

And so Hans and his kind host parted for the night.

CHAPTER IX.

BRIGHT DAYS

HANS' dreams might well be fair, if they were prophetic, for that day was but the beginning of many prosperous and happy ones Not only for the next day or the next upon that, he remained the guest

of Sir Thomas More, but for nearly three years he lived under his roof as one of his kind host's own family. All the clever and high-born people who visited the chancellor made much of him, and Hans was as happy as the day was long in that peaceful well-ordered household.

He painted a great many portraits during that time, not only of Sir Thomas himself, and of fair Mistress Margaret Roper, his married daughter, whom Sir Thomas so fondly loved, and of his grandchildren, but also of many of the chancellor's friends.

With so much to do, it may well be imagined that he never found time now to lounge about with his hands in his pockets, as in the old days, and as for the ~~which~~ ~~once~~ ~~were~~ ~~half~~ ~~their~~ ~~time~~ ~~empty~~, they ~~were~~ ~~now~~ ~~full~~, for he was paid the prices for his beautiful pictures which they so richly deserved, prices which would have made Master Brusch of Strasburg open his eyes.

Hans often privately wondered to himself how it was that he had been so foolish as to delay for so long coming to England. It was certainly nobody's fault but his own, and one day, in the fulness of his heart's gratitude to Sir Thomas More, he told him how he now blamed himself, and then he went on to tell him of that English gentleman who was visiting Dr. Erasmus at Basel, and advised him to try his fortune in England.

"And who was he?" asked Mistress Roper, who was sitting by at her tapestry frame. "What was his name?"

"Nay. That I cannot for the life of me remember," replied Hans, "for I am dull at names, especially foreign ones, and as I tell you, he was an Englishman."

"Oh!" smiled Sir Thomas. "You have grown into such an Englishman that you should no longer call Englishmen foreigners. But I wonder who it could have been?"

"He was a nobleman—that I remember," said Hans, "the more that he looked like one, which is not always the case."

"Now we come nearer," said Sir Thomas. "Was he young or old, or middle-aged—or how?"

"Young, and of the goodliest face and figure I ever beheld."

"But we have many handsome young noblemen," said Sir Thomas.

"Stay!" said Hans. "Give me till to-morrow, and perhaps I may be able to show you his likeness."

And the next day, at the same hour, Hans set before them a hastily-drawn sketch, but well coloured, of the nobleman's face. "It was easy enough, when I tried," he said, "for I never forgot his face, any more than I really did his words."

"That is my Lord of Surrey!" cried Sir Thomas and

Mistress Roper both in a breath, "and done as if he had been all the time before you."

"Or you had cut a hole in the canvas and set his face in it," said Mistress Roper delightedly

"Surrey—yes That was his name," said Hans. "What a stupid head mine is!" and for its dulness, he cudgelled it well with his fist. "Do you chance to know him?"

"Ay, truly," replied Sir Thomas "Who does not? The flower of the court. Scholar—poet—and, above all, a chivalrous gentleman. He is the son of his grace of Norfolk, whom you have already seen in this house Surrey would have been here himself, but that he is in Ireland "

"I should rarely like to see him again," said Hans wistfully

"And in the meantime, I will next Sunday invite the Duke of Norfolk to dine with me, and after dinner he shall tell us whose face this is It will not take all his wisdom to know his own son "

Accordingly with Sunday came the Duke of Norfolk. He arrived just in time for service, which on Sundays the chancellor and all his family attended in Chelsea Church Very often Sir Thomas himself took part in the service, and the duke was astonished on entering the church, to see Sir Thomas with a surplice on, singing in the choir

"Odd's bodikins my lord chancellor!" said the duke

when service was over, and they returned together to the house "What! a parish clerk—a parish clerk! You dishonour the king and his office!"

"Nay," said Sir Thomas, "you may not think your master and mine will be offended with me for serving God, his master, or thereby count his office dishonoured"

And so they went to dinner "Have you news of your son of late?" asked Sir Thomas when the cloth was withdrawn

"Ay," sighed the duke, "fair news enough, but I weary to see his face again, and to hear the music of his voice"

"Sigh not so heavily my lord duke," said Sir Thomas, with the twinkle in his eyes that made his face so good to look upon, "for though I cannot glad your ears with the music of his voice, I can comfort your eyes with something that will remind you of his face—that is, if your eyes see like mine"

Then with his own hands he drew aside the covering he had thrown over Hans' sketch. The duke started from his seat with astonishment and delight. "A sight indeed, for sore eyes! My gallant Surrey!" he said "Where is the man who has done this?"

"At your elbow," smiled Sir Thomas. "This is Master Hans Holbein the painter"

"What shall I say to you, but that I thank you heartily!" said the duke, clasping Hans by the hand.

"But you are no new acquaintance, let me tell you, for often my son has told me the merry tale of the Bookworm and the Ale-drinking Fellow "

But Hans did not look at all merry at this reminder. "That is long ago," he said, "and by-gones—"

"Shall be by-gones," said the duke "Well, well, since you prefer it But my lord chancellor," he went on, turning to Sir Thomas, "if you be not careful, we shall have you led to the block for high treason."

"The saints forbid!" smiled Sir Thomas. "How so? What is the colour of my offence?"

"Colour forsooth! All colours That you keep such treasure as this master of painting, boxed away in your retreat of Chelsea here, like a miser keeps his gold "

"Why, truly I am not altogether unattainted of the accusation, my lord marshal; but in inviting your grace here to-day, I looked to wiping off some part of it. Master Holbein should indeed no longer spend his gifts in limited service like mine and my friends' Their fragrance should be wafted to court, and reach the senses of the king. But you know I am just now in less favour with his majesty than once I may have been "

"Tut!" impatiently said the duke "And whose fault but your own is that? You are proud my lord chancellor, and pride—"

"Goeth before a fall "

"Nay, the king is too wise not to know when he is faithfully served. It was Wolsey's greed of wealth that ruined him. You are not greedy enough. I have heard Henry's own lips say so—though I'll warrant he'd be of another mind, if he knew of the talents you keep rolled in a napkin here."

"They are at his majesty's disposal," replied More. "What say you Master Hans? Will you be presented at court, as my lord of Norfolk desires?"

"Or what if we brought the king here?" said the duke, marking the pleasure sparkling in Hans' eyes.

"Why, better still, if he will come," said Sir Thomas.

"Oh, he will come," said the duke. "For Henry loves an outing as truly as any London 'prentice loves a holiday."

CHAPTER X.

ROYAL FAVOURS

THE duke was quite right when he said that the king would come to Chelsea for the asking. He accepted the invitation very graciously, "but," added a little sourly, "it is some time since my lord chancellor extended us his hospitality."

And with words of the same sort he also greeted Sir Thomas when, with his accustomed modest state,

he received him at the water stairs at the end of the great avenue

"Your majesty's time has been otherwise employed," replied Sir Thomas "And I know only, since the king is pleased once more to visit my poor house, that it rejoices me and mine to bid your majesty a hearty welcome"

"As well it rejoices mine to accept it," said the king, throwing his arm affectionately round his host's neck, as they advanced along the avenue to the sound of sweet music, played by unseen musicians amid the trees "I know not how it is," he went on, "but I go to no house whose ordering so pleases me and cheers my heart as yours, my good lord chancellor One hears no quarrelling or intemperate words here"

"Why, no," smiled Sir Thomas "Why should there be?"

"Each performs his duty, yet there is always alacrity, and for sober mirth, it is never wanting."

"I trust not, for 'tis said, 'all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy,'" merrily smiled Sir Thomas

"Content seems to dwell in the very air," continued Henry, "and on my faith I believe in your trees here, the birds sing sweeter than in others"

"Truly they sing sweetly," said Sir Thomas, listening through the momentary silence to the merry bird chorus

"And there is such passing affection and glee in the

eyes of these four-footed creatures it is your pleasure to have always about your heels How is it?" sighed Henry

"Nay, should we not all try to make each other and ourselves as happy as this changing world permits?"

"Oh, Utopia! Utopia!" laughed the king slyly "If it be not here at Chelsea, then in sooth it is nowhere!"

Once Sir Thomas More had written a book, in which he had striven to draw the picture of a kingdom where all was so well and justly governed, that nobody had cause to complain, and he called his book from two Greek words, Ou-Topos—"Nowhere."

"But what have we here?" went on the king as now they stood together on the threshold of the great hall, where the board was ready spread for dinner, and upon whose walls Sir Thomas had caused to be arranged, just facing the king's seat at table, all the pictures which Hans had painted of himself and his family. "Gra'mercy! What goodly company is this?"

"One which I have convened to wish your majesty good appetite, and health on it," said Sir Thomas, well pleased at Henry's evident delight and astonishment. "Will it please you to eat?"

And without the help of his eyes, which were all on the pictures, the king sank into his chair, and though his journey up river had furnished him when he

arrived, with an excellent appetite, he kept forgetting to eat, in his admiration of the pictures

"You do not eat," expostulated his host, rising to pour wine into the king's cup

"Oh, truly, I am dining too well," courteously rejoined the king "But—so, bravely!" he went on as Sir Thomas poured out the wine "Brim it to the full my lord chancellor, that I may in a bumper pledge your health and that of this your family I see before me," and he pointed to the pictures "Fair Mistress Roper, truly I think your sweet lips must open and speak to me as I look! and you, my lord-chancellor, I know not whether you have walked down from the frame, or walked up into it! And your brave little grandson there, astride his hobby-horse! Faith, we feel as if we must kiss his chubby cheeks! Who is the creator of such glorious work? What is the painter's name? Is he living?"

"In great hope," replied Sir Thomas, "that your majesty will approve his pictures"

"By my crown, his hope is a certainty! Is he to be had for money?"

"Why indeed, he loves money as well as many a worse and better man does, I trow," said Sir Thomas

"Where is he?"

"Close at hand. And when your majesty has dined, I will present him to you"

"Despatch then!" interrupted the king, almost

forgetting his courtesy in his impatience And as quickly as possible the rest of the banquet was served, and then Sir Thomas left the hall a moment, to re-enter, leading Hans by the hand "Here," he said, "is the painter of the pictures which your majesty so well approves, Master Hans Holbein of Basel"

"Nay," said the king, raising Hans as he dropped on one knee before him. "Not at our feet, but in our service Hans Holbein What say you?"

But for the excitement and fluster he was in, Hans could for the moment say nothing at all.

"Well?" said Henry impatiently, "you hesitate"

"No I don't," blurted out Hans in his hurry But for all that he did, in his mindfulness of Sir Thomas More's many kindnesses and benefits, and his regrets to think that this great new honour would take him away from the happy home at Chelsea. "No, I don't hesitate, my lord—your worship—your highness—your majesty," floundered on poor Hans, "but—only—"

"The workman is worthy of his wage Well, we are coming to it."

"I wasn't thinking of that," protested Hans

"But we were," laughed the king. "Come, what say you? Painter in chief and ordinary to the king, and two hundred florins a year?"

And two hundred florins was a large sum in those days.

"Is it a bargain?" said the king, taking Hans by the hand.

"It is an honour," replied countly Hans, "beyond my best dreamings."

"But equal only to his merits," thought Sir Thomas, who was greatly pleased with the success of the plan. "He owes his good fortune to my lord of Norfolk. Right glad I am," he went on to his son-in-law Master Roper, as they walked together on the terrace in the cool of the evening, after the king was gone. "Right glad I am our Hans is in his right place at last, for if anything should take me hence, he would have been cast on the waves of an unkind world, and he is less skilful at the rudder of life, than he is with his graver and brush. But if the king—God save him!—is changeful in some matters, he abides by his favourites in such matters as art and letters."

"As he does in your judgment of them," said Roper proudly, "and of all else. The king to-day treated you with such familiarity, with his arm about your neck, as he never before used but with Cardinal Wolsey, with whom I once saw him linked arm-in-arm."

Sir Thomas smiled. "I believe his grace does as sincerely love me as any subject within this realm, but for his arm about my neck, I count that none the safer."

"How?" said Master Roper.

"I may tell thee son Roper, I have no cause to be proud thereof, for if my head would win the king a castle in France, it would not fail to go off the neck he has embraced!"

CHAPTER XL

AN UNLUCKY PICTURE.

HOW truly Sir Thomas More judged the character of the king was only too quickly proved. Little more than a year after Hans Holbein left the roof of his first good friend in England, the chancellor was arrested and placed in the Tower on a charge of high treason, and shortly after he was beheaded on Tower Hill, whose stones were for ever reeking with the noble blood spilt by tyrannical kings. The accusation against him was that he refused to acknowledge the rights of Anne Bullen's daughter, Elizabeth, as King Henry's successor to the crown of England, while Mary, the child of Queen Katherine of Arragon, was living. So unreasoning and violent was Henry that a year after Sir Thomas' head had fallen, on that self-

same Tower Hill, the poor young mother of the child Elizabeth was executed, and the day after her death Henry married a third wife, Jane Seymour, who became the mother of King Edward the Sixth, and he, after all, was the king's successor

But death was making sad havoc with Hans' friends. Happy in his work as he was, and loaded with attentions and favours from the king and the court, he was often sad at heart, for thinking how agreeable soever the new friends were, they could not replace the old ones. One of the cruellest blows was the death of that oldest friend of all, Erasmus. Hans never saw him again in this world. He died peacefully, drawn gently away in the midst of his work, by the hand of death, at about the same time that his good friend Sir Thomas More was felled by the headsman's axe. And so, almost side by side, Erasmus and Sir Thomas More entered into rest, and their works live after them. In old Rotterdam stands the statue of the learned scholar Erasmus, reminding the world of one of its great men whose labours made his "life sublime." In a corner of quaint little old Chelsea church, half crowded out of sight by ugly pews, stands the monument of the good Lord Chancellor More, surmounted by his effigy. There in his long gown and ruff he lies, and upon his tomb should have been graven for

epitaph, the fulfilled wish that Shakespeare makes Wolsey measure to him

"That his bones,
When he has run his course, and sleeps in blessings,
May have a tomb of orphans' tears wept on them "

And so in the old way, amid laughter and tears, sad hearts and blithe ones, time ran on for Hans

He lived now principally at Whitehall, which having once been a palace of the luxurious Cardinal Wolsey, was now a favourite residence of the king. It was very large at that time. The royal apartments ran near the river, and were surrounded by gardens, and tennis-courts, and jousting-places, and bowling-greens, and all round almost from Charing Cross to Westminster were houses and dwellings for the court gentlemen and ladies in attendance on the king and queen. The greatest part of all this no longer remains

Half-way along the road to Westminster, stood Hans Holbein's famous gateway. The king ordered him to draw a plan of it, and from this it was built. It was a very large structure, with walls of red and white brick set in zigzag and chess-board patterns, and adorned with roses, and portcullises, and initials, and other cognizances of the king, intertwined with those of his queen of the moment. Of the moment, one says, because poor Queen Anne Bullen's last mo

ments were now very close at hand. She had been his wife for three years, but Henry, when he wanted what he called "a reason" for a change, was never long in coming on an excuse, and he soon found one in Anno's case, and having had her put to death, he married Jane Seymour, whom he loved after his own particular fashion, though whether he would have continued to do so, was of course quite another matter. Fortunately for her, she died soon after her little son Edward was born, before it could be put to the proof.

One would almost have imagined that after this, Henry would have had no more wives, but that was not the case. He had heard of a lady living in Flanders whom he thought might be suitable, and not unnaturally wished first to see what she was like. So Hans the painter was despatched to Flanders to paint her portrait, but before he had finished it, there was another change in Henry's mind, this time it was in what he called his "religion." He had once opposed the famous reformer, Luther, but now he was determined to encourage the work of the Reformation which was spreading fast, and as the Duchess of Milan belonged to the Church of Rome, he gave up the idea of marrying her, and ordered Hans to repair to Rhemish Prussia to paint the portrait of the Princess Anne of Cleves, who was a Protestant, and whom his new

minister, Thomas Cromwell, had recommended as a wife for the king. Cromwell however, was thinking much more of the use to the new form of religion the king's marriage with Anne of Cleves would be, than of whether her appearance would please Henry.

"What is the princess like?" said the king. "Has she a goodly person?"

"I am but a poor judge of such matters," replied Cromwell, who was an honest, but stern man.

"There is a saying," said Henry, "that no wise person buys a pig in a poke, lest his bargain turn out not to his liking."

"The lady," said Cromwell, "is at Cleves, and is to be seen doubtless for the asking."

"Ay, as she appears to be had for it," said Henry, who seemed a little doubtful, "but kings cannot go here and there wife-choosing, as Thumpkin chooses apples at market. While we were going to Cleves, the kingdom would be going all to sixes and sevens."

"True," said Cromwell thoughtfully, "and it is, as your majesty observes, already pretty well at fives and sixes."

Henry's brow knitted, he had said nothing of the kind, and he objected to have words put into his mouth, but he let it pass for the moment.

"But I see no difficulty in the matter," went on

Cromwell. "Send Master Holbein the painter to draw the princess's portrait. He has had nothing to do since he came back from Flanders but waste his time, and rollick on his two hundred florins. I marked him yesterday, spending the whole afternoon playing tennis with half a score of other ne'er-do-wells, yonder in the yard. Let him go to Cleves and paint the princess, 'twill at least keep him out of mischief."

Alack! poor honest Thomas Cromwell knew not what a peck of it that speech was brewing for himself. How could he dream that it would bring his head in its turn to the scaffold, as it did! Meantime his suggestion pleased the king mightily, and once more Hans was despatched on his journeys.

Now it needs no repeating that Hans was wondrously clever, but there is such a thing as being too clever, and he was so in this case. When he arrived at Cleves, and was brought into the presence of the Princess Anne, he was taken aback, for though he was too well mannered even to tell himself so, he thought her one of the plainest women he had ever seen. What was to be done? "Well," thought Hans, "of course I have not to marry her, and it is not for me to give an opinion. I am simply ordered to make her picture, and it behoves me to make the best one I can." And he set to work, and an excellent picture

he made "A most charming one," all the princess's courtly friends said. In short, with his gift for seeing the better side of things, he just picked out and improved upon what was best in her features, and softened down the homelier parts, and made a very pretty picture indeed of Anne of Cleves. She herself was exceedingly satisfied with it, and when Hans arrived at Whitehall once more, and set the portrait before the king, Henry was quite delighted.

"She will do," he said, "she will do. Let her be sent at once."

And she was sent. But when Henry went to meet her, and saw her in the flesh, of which she had a good share, for from all accounts her face and figure were as broad as they were long, he was in a great rage.

"She is as fat as a pig!" he cried. "Take her away!"

And with little ceremony the poor lady was hurried off into the country out of his sight, but having made a sort of a bargain for her, and after all, bought his "pig," as he called her, in a poke, she had to be kept at the country's expense in England, and passed many years comfortably, which perhaps she would not have done had she been a little more comely, and so had been made queen as Henry intended.

But that cleverness of Hans was the ruin of Crom-

well The king was so furious with him for recommending Anne of Cleves for his wife, that he determined to put an end to all his advice; and having looked about, and scraped up a few other little causes of blame, or what he considered causes, he had him arrested and sent to the Tower; and in a few days more the new prime-minister's life was sacrificed for his cruel king's whims, as Sir Thomas More's had been

CHAPTER XII.

LORD JACKO.

WHITEHALL was a very busy bustling court, full of all sorts of people. To begin with, it did not want for fools, that is for professional fools, or men who were called fools or jesters, and who were sometimes wiser than other people, though all their business was to make jokes and amuse the court. There were three of those at one time Will Somers, and a very good, charitable minded, kind-hearted man he was, and Patch, who had once been jester-in-chief to Cardinal Wolsey, but whom Wolsey made a present of to the king, who had taken a fancy to some of his

quaint sayings Then last, but by no means least, was John Heywood. If he had lived in these days, he would have been called a poet, for a poet he was, and more of one by a great deal than many who call themselves, or are called so now He was full of wit, and quick fancies, and clever ideas, and as he was paid to amuse the king, he was called a "fool." Then there were a great many lords and ladies and idle people about the court, who would have found it difficult to turn their hands to anything that would have earned a groat's worth of bread to keep them from starving, but having plenty of money they enjoyed themselves well enough, and served to make a show at a masquo, or a feast, or in a grand procession.

Among these was a certain Lord Jacko Not to be sure, that Jacko was his real name, but it had been given him by his friends, because he was a very vain affected fellow, whose vanity and affectation had grown worse instead of being rubbed off by his travels in France and Italy, and when he returned to England, what with his apish antics and smart clothes, he reminded everybody of a dressed-up monkey, and so he was nicknamed "Lord Jacko," or "the monkey who had seen the world," for he bored everybody he came near, with telling how much better everything was managed in Paris or in Florence, till it was generally

wished he had remained in one or other of those cities

He did not seem to mind being called Lord Jacko, perhaps because it sounded a little foreign, but if he had minded, it would probaby have been all the same, for the name stuck to him and everybody called him so, and therefore he must be called so in this true history

Lord Jacko had never bestowed much of his notice on Hans Your Germans, and Dutchmen, and Swiss were vulgar fellows, he said, who had none of the "I-don't-know-what" air of the dear French and Italian people, and Hans was still less conscious of Lord Jacko's existence. His mind indeed, of late, was occupied with very different matters The death of Cromwell had for one thing very greatly distressed him, for, with all his fault-finding, Cromwell was a sincere, honest friend to Hans, as he had been to many And then too, Hans lived in mortal terror lest the king should punish him for painting Anne of Cleves in colours she did not deserve, and a score of times a day he used to wish himself safe back in Basel, for all his love of England, and his luxurious quarters at Whitehall Had he dared, he would have run away, but that might have raised the hue and cry after him and put the king in mind of him, just when

his one desire was to be out of his majesty's remembrance. The wisest course certainly was to keep quiet, and for a while hardly anything was to be seen of Hans. People said he was busy, ill, sulky, and letting them say what they pleased, he kept close as a snail in its shell.

"Out of sight, out of mind," he said one day to the Duke of Norfolk, who came to find out what really had become of him, and found him hard at work over a disc of ivory not much larger than a crown piece.

"Why, that was well enough for a time," nodded the duke, "and perhaps you were wise. You are safer than some people who flit round the throne like a moth does round a candle. But what are you doing there? Take aside your hand a moment, that I may see. It is so small."

"Little and good I trust, my lord!" replied Hans, doing as he was desired, and displaying a beautiful little portrait of the king.

"H'm!" said the duke. "None so little—Henry grows fatter every day, and for the goodness—why, of course, 'the king can do no wrong,' that is well known, but for your work here, it is indeed exquisite, and when Henry sees it, your head will be safe enough, for the skill you have shown in drawing his."

"It is but 'prentice work," said Hans. "I am studying miniature painting under Luca Cornelli."

"I take it Signior Luca Cornelli would call it a masterpiece, as I do," said the duke admiringly.

"He says it is very well," said Hans. "It is finished now."

"Ay, finished indeed. What do you intend doing with it?"

"Begging your grace to accept it, as it pleases you."

"Right gratefully," replied the duke, delighted with his beautiful present, and inwardly resolving to show it to the king before he slept. "But take my advice Master Holbein, crib yourself up no longer in this dull room here. Believe me, the storm is all passed over. The king's smiles shine everywhere just now."

"And on your grace's family especially. is it not so?" said Hans. "For his next wife is of your race."

"Yes. Poor thing!" said the duke. "She has your prayers for her happiness I trust Master Holbein?"

"And long life—heartily," said Hans.

"Who shall say our star is not in the ascendant?" went on the duke. "So be counselled my good Master Holbein. Believe me, your error would be in keeping longer out of sight. Only yesterday I heard his majesty inquiring if you were indisposed."

"Why, truly, to show myself I have been—" laughed Hans. "But I will valiantly come forth again"

"Do so, and fare you well!" said the duke

Next day, true to his word, Hans showed himself in the gardens, strolling about the river terrace, but his heart almost jumped to his mouth when presently he caught sight of the king approaching, attended by a little crowd of ladies and gentlemen

"Fair greeting to you Master Holbein!" said Henry in his kindest tones. "'Tis good to see you about again His grace of Norfolk tells me you have been suffering from—from—"

"A nervous attack, yes, so please your majesty," hurriedly said Hans

"But indeed we are sorry And the aches and pains of your poor head—"

"Nay, I was more in fear for that than for actually feeling any And it is all past now Your majesty's gracious smile is the best physic. I—I think it was merely a little—little overwork"

"It was a great deal of it Master Holbein," said the king with a meaning look "But be content. Do not try it again It is dangerous. Come, in with you!" and playfully seizing Hans by the arm, he sent him almost headlong into the barge moored at the bottom

of the water steps. "We are going to spend the day at Hampton, and will not take a refusal from you to be of our company."

CHAPTER XIII.

WISDOM AND FOLLY.

NEVER was merrier party, for besides the king's guests, of whom one was Lord Jacko, Master John Heywood, Will Somers, and Patch were on board, and one of the ladies had her lute with her, and they sang a couple of madrigals, and then Master Heywood set going a catch, which lasted till they passed Battersea.

"Do you land here my lord?" then asked Will Somers of Lord Jacko

"No," said Lord Jacko, who was stretched in a most elegant attitude among the red silken cushions, and looked more than content to be where he was "Land in that filthy bog! Certainly not."

"Prithee, why should he land there Will?" asked the king.

"Because 'tis the place for simples Does not your majesty know that they flourish there? and that a

new, or a foreign sort, especially if the bloom be gay, is worth a king's ransom to the growers?"

"Then go thyself," growled Lord Jacko, "with thy red and yellow jerkin "

"Nay, I am not for plucking," rejoined Will "The king loves to have me in his own pleasure, side by side in the parterre with his laurel poet, Master Heywood here, and Patch, and the day is far off when he will tear us hence, and fling us aside."

"Like the ill weeds you are," laughed Henry

"In whom so much golden grain is tangled up For my part, I not Brother Patch," went on Will to Patch, who was somewhat silent, "his majesty will never spare us, till he turns water-drinker "

"So cheer up then varlet, you must be safe enough," said Henry "But what maggot is at thy crack-brain now Will? for, by my crown, I see not thy drift."

"Let it carry your majesty up the golden flood turned on one fine day by Patch and me, from the cask in the wine-cellars of Hampton It was a good turn your wisest chancellor would never have done your majesty."

"It was a mischievous trick," said the king, "and you should both have been whipped at the cart's tail, had you had your deserts "

"Ay!" sighed Patch penitently

One day, when Hampton Court belonged to Cardinal Wolsey, Will Somers and Patch, in search of some new trick, found their way into the wine-cellars beneath the palace, and tapped a cask of canary, that is to say, "can'ry" was marked on the cask; but lo! instead of the golden liquor, out streamed a rush of golden florins. Patch, who loved his master Wolsey, never forgave himself that day's work, for it crowned the king's growing anger with the cardinal, to think he had hoarded up such wealth.

"But it was rare wine," said the incorrigible Will. "Such as a little of goes a long way."

"Why, to be sure, if right were right," said Heywood, "but oftentimes much of it goes the wrong way. What say you my lord?" he added, turning on Lord Jacko, beside whom he was seated.

"I don't know," sulkily said Lord Jacko.

"I believe you do not," said Will, "for though your lordship's body has travelled far, you left your wits at home, laid up in Battersea lavender."

"Come come, manners Will!" smiled the king.

"Faith! Those have followed my wits, that, do what I will, refuse to stay within, as his lordship's do; and I have worn them so constantly, that they are like an ancient leathern jack, past mending, unless I put a fresh patch upon 'em."

"Oh, Patch! Come; thou'rt a sad fool to-day," said the king

"'Tis a sad world," sighed Patch, letting his bauble drabble in the stream. "Have you not ever found it so Master Heywood?"

"Why, 'tis as you take it," replied Heywood. "Prithce, your lute fair lady, for a moment," and he struck a prelude and sang:

"Let the world slide, let the world go
A fig for care, and a fig for woe!
If I can't pry, why I can owe,
And death makes equal the high and low!"

"As Master Holbein is making clear to us in his new paintings on our audience-chamber walls," said the king, for Hans was once more busy on a Dance of Death for Henry. "And, if we mistake not, you have depicted a poor fool in his cap and bells hurried off by the grim sergeant"

"Yes, he stands next to the king, so please your majesty," said Hans

"I thought," said Patch, "the fool neighboured a fine lord in his plumes and broidery"

"Ay, on one side, and the new-married pair to the other—that is so," said Hans.

"A truce to death," said the king, his brows cloud-

ing "My lord of Norfolk showed me yesterday at supper an exquisite presentment of myself in little."

"It is not as large as life," smiled Hans, well pleased

"No, but as true," said the king "And he further said you are now studying from the life—the living figure."

"Now, that is really interesting," said Lord Jacko, rousing up "And as I love to encourage art, I will be your model Master Holbein. What do you say to that?"

"Thanks many my lord," said Hans. "But for a few groats I have obtained the services of a poor beggar man, and he has a truly fine form"

"And doth not bolster it up with stays?" said Will

"Nor padding?" said Patch.

"Faith no!" laughed Hans "He has scarce a rag on."

"Oh, I protest!" said the fop, applying his civet box to his straight little insignificant nose. "How can you endure such a fellow?"

"I would tolerate worse company for my art's sake, my lord"

"Why then, Lord Jacko will certainly be looking in on you Master Hans," said Will, "for you have only to glance at his countenance, to see it is full of art."

"I see that nature has small part in it," muttered Hans, "for the rouge and powder smothering it"

"Well, there is no telling," said Lord Jacko, well pleased with a compliment from Will, "but I may look in on you one of these days, and see how you progress. And if your work pleases me, who knows but I might commission you to paint me full length!"

"Have you not an old tale in your country, called 'Hans in luck?'" whispered Will to Hans

Hans nodded.

"Then you are he, of a certainty Body o' me, you set best foot foremost from your bed this morning Master Holbein, to stumble on such patronage as my Lord Jacko's, and in all your life together, you have never painted such a load of brocade and finery"

"When I find leisure I will certainly look in upon you," said Lord Jacko airily, as they parted on landing "*A rivederci*, friend!"

"What did he say?" growled Hans. "Some papperlapapp"

"Faith, I think it meant he hopes to see you again soon," said Heywood, who knew some Italian

But Hans, having no such hope, walked away in silence

CHAPTER XIV.

A QUIET MORNING.

HANS and his beggar man got on wondrously well together. For some days after that trip to Hampton Court, which, being by order of the king, he could not refuse, he worked at his living figure industriously, denying himself to all comers

His two truest and cleverest friends and admirers, Lord Norfolk and his son, well understanding his desire not to be disturbed, refrained entirely from calling at his lodgings

One evening however, when he could no longer see to paint, Hans strolled out for a whiff of fresh air in Tothill Fields, and meeting the Earl of Surrey, who also dearly loved a country walk in the moonlight, they strolled part of the road home together

"By the way," said the earl as they went, "you will be getting a visitor to-morrow, if I mistake not."

"I trust you do my lord," said Hans, pulling a wry face "Unless you mean that it is yourself, or his grace your father, intend to honour me, for you come and go, and make no pother. And I had liefer even

the king diverted himself elsewhere this next day or so, till I have my picture well forward."

"I have heard the king has no thought of stirring out, for his leg is painful these two days past"

"I am heartily glad—sorry, that is," said Hans, "and to all others I simply deny myself. So there is an end on't."

"I am none so sure," said the earl with a doubtful smile. "Some folks will not take a no"

"Conscience o' me my lord!" cried Hans. "Is not an Englishman's house his castle?"

"But you are not an Englishman," laughed Surrey, who loved a jest.

"Faith, no! neither am I," laughed Hans, "though I often forget that. But no matter, Switzers too, can stand on their rights"

"Well, your castle is threatened to be besieged anyhow," said Surrey. "I heard Lord Jacko talk of visiting you to-morrow"

"A thousand thunders!" cried Hans, who had not forgotten his German, Englishman though he might be. "Why, he said he might come only at some moment when he had leisure"

"Well, he has little else, after he has dressed and dined. So be resigned Master Holbein. Though you must not think I did not strive to prevent him, but a

jackass is easier to be persuaded to go on, than he is to stand still. So, fare you well, 'forewarned is forearmed!' Pray for a rainy day, for Loid Jacko shrinks from a drop of rain on his gay plumage"

And so they separated, in the clear light of the moon, which augured no rainy day

Next morning indeed, was singularly beautiful. The sun shone brilliantly into Hans' painting-room, flinging glorious effects of light and shade on the handsome beggar man, who stood against a dark-green curtain for a background

"The world and his wife seem all abroad to-day, Master Holbein," remarked the man, as from time to time strains of far-off music wafted from the streets and the river in at the open lattice

"So the world and his wife come not knocking at my door," said Hans, busily stippling in, "I am glad they should be merry. And distant music helps work."

But he had not finished speaking, ere the soft sounds were lost in a tremendous stir and clatter in the court-yard below.

"It must be the king after all," groaned Hans, and looking with dismay at his live model, "though he generally makes no such commotion. I wish he had stayed at home and nursed his leg"

"Ho! ho! within there!" shouted a pompous voice. "Make way for my lord!" and then began a loud tattoo on Hans' street door.

"The house must be a-fire!" cried the beggar man, starting all out of his beautiful position

"What is it?" shouted down Hans, running to the window, and putting his head out.

"What is it!" echoed the voice "What is it quotha! A way to speak, o' my conscience! I suppose you mean Who is it? You couldn't say less if my Lord Jacko was a block of wood "

"Lord Jacko!" groaned Hans

"Ay! I thought I'd pull you to your manners," said the noisy fellow triumphantly "Lord Jacko, and I am his footman And he will be here this moment, so open the door, quick," and the man redoubled his tattooing

"I am exceedingly sorry," said Hans, "but I am not at home "

"Not at home! Though you stand there filling the casement as large as life!"

"Ay, ay My body does—but that is nothing," argued Hans

"It is burly enough," said the fellow in insolent tones "Come, open at once Master Holbein Conscience o' me! a fine how-d'ye-do for a painting fellow

like you to stand parleying with the likes o' me, who am but my lord over again—when a nobleman, and one of my Lord Jacko's quality, calls on you. One would imagine it happened every day of the week."

"No It isn't so bad as that—" began Hans.

"Bad, sirrah!"

"No matter," said Hans, only eager to get back to his picture. "Hark ye friend," he went on, "go back to your master, and making him my humble respects, beg him to defer his visit till another day."

"What!" cried another voice, which set Hans' teeth all on edge "Send me from your pitiful door as if I was a beggar!"

"No my lord, I hope not," said Hans, "for I trust I never sent beggar from it yet, without a morsel of bread or a groat, but since you are a nobleman, and desire nothing particular of me—"

"I desire my portrait, sirrah!"

"As I say—nothing particular of me, I entreat you to depart in peace, and come again—if you must—at a more convenient time "

"It is perfectly convenient—"

"To you, ay, but not to me," said Hans waxing angry "I am busy "

"Busy, forsooth!" cried Lord Jacko, giving the panels of the door a kick, and bursting it open, he

scrambled upstairs "We'll soon see what makes you too busy to admit me"

"No you won't," said Hans, making a dash forward and seizing Lord Jacko as he advanced.

"Won't I?" persisted the nobleman in tones whose rude insolence astonished the beggar man, as he struggled to wriggle out of Hans' hands, but they were too strong for him, and, gripping him by the shoulders, Hans flung him to the bottom of the stairs, where he lay motionless as a log

Then ensued such a commotion of women's shrieks, and angry altercation and fisticuffing between Hans' neighbours, and Lord Jacko's lackeys, as never was heard, and amidst the confusion Hans made his escape Besides being very angry with himself, he was frightened, for the one look he had been able to get of Lord Jacko, made him think he had seriously hurt, or perhaps even killed him And on he rushed, till he reached the royal apartments, where, disregarding of the stares and detaining hands of ushers and chamberlains and gentlemen-in-waiting, he found himself in the presence of the king

"Odds bodikins! Master Hans. What now?" cried Henry, who was seated in a cushioned bay-window overlooking the river, quietly reading a book "What now?"

"I know not rightly," blundered out Hans when he found breath

"Ha!" laughed the king. "Some pretty piece of work, or it would not be Hans Holbein."

"It is no laughing matter I fear," said Hans, "for I am greatly afraid I have killed a man"

"You Hans?" said the king, laying aside his book "Where does he lie?"

"At the bottom of my stairs, so please your majesty Ah!" he added, drawing a long breath, "yes, there he comes By the Lord Harry! and in a plight."

"Can it be Lord Jacko?" said Henry, looking hard at a deplorable figure which came lumping forward into his presence, with a handkerchief tied over one eye, in anything but becoming fashion "Why man, has your brain met with an extra crack this morning?"

"Ay," fumed Lord Jacko, shaking his fist vigorously at the culprit Hans, "and 'tis all his doing Send for the hangman—the headsman—the—the sexton—"

"Wait, you are not dead yet," said the king "Explain what you did."

"I—I called on the fellow."

"He burst in on me," corrected Hans "Whether I would or no, he would thrust his company upon me,

and I was busy, and wished him at Jericho—as I should a better man—”

“And so?”

“He would not take no—”

“And so?”

“I pitched him down stairs”

“That was unmannerly of you Hans”

“I am glad it was no worse,” said Hans

“Send for the headsman! Send for the headsman!”
screeched Lord Jacko

“If he comes, he shall settle your head first my lord,” angrily said the king “Be silent!—for a dead man you are mighty troublesome I say, you behaved scandalously Hans Holbein. We thought you knew better”

“So did I,” said Hans penitently

“Lord Jacko was enough to provoke a saint!” cried the beggar man, who had followed Hans, and now stood boldly forward in his scanty rags

“Who are you?” snarled Lord Jacko

“The king’s subject as well as you,” said the beggar man, “and I say a saint would not have borne your insolence.”

“And I am no saint,” pleaded Hans

“No faith!” said the king “You have sinned shamefully Hans Holbein”

"Yes, yes Where's the headsman?" began Lord Jacko, whose greatest hurt had been a terrible fright.

"Down on your knees Hans," went on the king, "and beg Lord Jacko's pardon"

"No, no!" screamed Lord Jacko "No—"

"Silence!" said the king, and while the dropping of a pin might have been heard, down on his knees went Hans "My lord," said he, "I know not what to say, but that in deed and in truth I do heartily repent my violence to you; and entreat you generously to pardon my offence"

"No, no I won't Is it likely now?" said Lord Jacko, spurning the suppliant "I'll have his life! I'll have his life! His good-for-nothing life! And if your majesty refuses it to me, I'll be revenged on him myself"

"Be it so my lord," said Henry with boding stern brows "Contrive what punishment you will on him, and the measure of it running over shall be meted to you again Beware! Remember pray my lord, that I can, whenever I please, make seven lords out of seven ploughmen, but I cannot make one Holborn even of seven lords"

And amid a clamour of groans and hisses, Lord Jacko slunk away, and Hans and the beggar man,

followed by an admiring rabble, went back to their work

But Hans lost his commission to paint Lord Jacko's "figure," for Lord Jacko never darkened his door or crossed his path again.

CHAPTER XV.

CALM DAYS.

IF the most uneventful life is really the happiest, as some people say, then the closing years of Hans Holbein's life were the happiest, for they passed in peace and content, though indeed, one sore grief befell him. It was a bitter sad day when his brave, courteous, and courtly friend, Earl Surrey, incurred the king's displeasure, and was executed in the Tower.

Very often Hans would wonder to himself how Henry could be so ruthless to those who had faithfully served him, and he never could find any more satisfactory answer to this problem, than that all the good qualities of Henry Tudor, King of England, were blighted by his inordinate love of that same Henry Tudor, and Hans thought that selfishness was a vile

thing indeed, and should be kept under as the dragon was kept under the horse of St George on banners and church windows, struggling for mastery, but never gaining it

Before many more years had passed, another of Hans Holbein's pictures was realized, and death took Henry, and led him away into the unknown land, whither he had hurried so many before their time

If Hans grieved for his loss, which on his own account he might well do, he had cause to be thankful that the king did not live another day, for that would have cost the life of his good friend and patron, the Duke of Norfolk, who, like the ill-fated earl his son, was doomed to die the very next day following on the one on which Henry himself died.

And so the Duke of Norfolk was saved, and henceforth, in his house at Aldgate, Hans lived, beloved and honoured, and died regretted.

But Hans Holbein's work lives on, and it will live for many a generation longer. On the walls of royal palaces and stately mansions it glows fresh and life-like as ever. His pictures are very numerous. He painted in oil, water-colour, and distemper, in large, and in miniature, and each and all his pictures, in their kind, are the perfection of his beautiful art. Whatever his hands found to do, he did with all his

might and heart, sparing himself never; and though such wonderful gifts fall to few, the energy and faithfulness shine a bright example for all who ever think of "*Hans the Painter.*"

THE END.

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